

FACT SHEET

This fact sheet describes youth involvement in enforcement and survey programs to prevent illegal tobacco sales to persons under 18 years of age.

- The Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act is a California law that prohibits tobacco sales to minors and requires that retailers check identification (ID) of persons trying to buy tobacco who appear under 18 years of age.
- The CDHS Tobacco Control Section has contracts with The American Lung Association in California to recruit 14- to 16-year-old teens to participate in enforcement and survey tobacco purchases to prevent illegal tobacco sales to minors.
- The STAKE Act program is divided into two parts:
 - The first part is enforcement conducted by the California Department of Health Services, Food and Drug Branch (CDHS/FDB), who accompany youth into stores while youth attempt to buy tobacco. Stores that sell to the teens are cited and fined.
 - The second part is the statewide youth purchase survey. The Annual Purchase Survey Contractor supervises the youth during the survey. Youth enter stores and attempt to purchase tobacco. However, the survey is not an enforcement operation. Its purpose is to collect data only and retailers are not cited or fined for sales to youth.
- Teen participants will be trained on buying procedures and avoidance of confrontations the day they work, not during the application process.
- In the 11 years of STAKE Act, no one has gone to court over an offense. Your identity is protected to the best of our ability. We collect evidence during compliance checks, including receipts of sale. Some volunteers are videotaped during compliance checks for evidence. If tobacco products are sold to teens during enforcement operations, the accompanying investigator will notify the storeowner days after the teen has left the premises. Never in the presence of the youth.
- Participating teens are required to carry a valid California Driver's License or a California ID.
- Either FDB investigators or the Annual Purchase Survey Contractor will provide transportation and meals for the youth on the day they work. All drivers are fully insured or otherwise covered by the State.
- According to the California Department of Public Health, the percent of retailers selling to youth in 2008 was 12.6%. In comparison to 1995, the first year of enforcement, the percentage was 37%.